

**STATEMENT OF JANET SNYDER MATTHEWS, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
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OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS,
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
CONCERNING S. 1378, THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT
AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2005.**

September 22, 2005

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 1378, a bill to amend the National Historic Preservation Act to provide appropriation authorization and improve the operations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The Department supports S. 1378 with an amendment to extend the authorization of the Historic Preservation Fund for ten years until 2015.

S. 1378 would extend the authorization of the Historic Preservation Fund for an additional six years. The bill would also make a number of changes to the authority for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) by increasing the membership of the ACHP, authorizing the governor appointed to the ACHP to have a designee serve in his place, revising the number of members that constitute a quorum, revising various financial and administrative authorities of the ACHP, authorizing the ACHP to solicit donations, and authorizing the ACHP to enter into cooperative agreements with other federal agencies to improve the effectiveness of the administration of grant or assistance programs to help meet the purposes of the National Historic Preservation Act.

In addition, the bill also changes the authorization level for the ACHP from \$4 million per fiscal year to such sums as may be necessary. It also makes the ACHP permanent instead of reauthorizing the ACHP for the standard five-year period.

The Historic Preservation Fund grew out of the recommendations of the 1966 Special Committee on Historic Preservation of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The Special Committee recommended the establishment of a grant program to State and local governments to carry out inventory and survey programs in coordination with the National Park Service. In 1970, a historic preservation grant program was established and administered by the National Park Service in partnership with State governments on a cost-sharing basis. In 1976, the Historic Preservation Fund was created with revenues from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas production.

Over the years, the Historic Preservation Fund has provided essential support to the State Historic Preservation Offices that operate the national program at the State level.

Through the work of our partners in the States, we can cite significant achievements over the past year:

- The National Park Service approved 1,537 new listings, which include 46,619 properties, in the National Register of Historic Places. This brings the total number of National Register properties to 79,617 listings that include over 1.4 million properties.

- Jointly administered by the National Park Service and the Internal Revenue Service, and in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Officers, the Historic Preservation Tax Incentives resulted in the rehabilitation of over 1,200 historic properties listed in the National Register, creating over 15,000 new housing units and generating \$3.8 billion in leveraged private investment—all during 2004. Since its inception in 1976, this tax incentives program has generated over \$33 billion in historic preservation activity.
- In FY 2005, the Save America's Treasures (SAT) grant program awarded a total of 145 matching grants in 43 states and the District of Columbia totaling \$29.5 million. 337 applications were received that totaled \$134 million. The SAT program is administered by the National Park Service, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Over the years, the Historic Preservation Fund authority has been a highly flexible authority for developing targeted grant programs that address the broad purposes of the National Historic Preservation Act. They include the grants to Indian Tribes to support Tribal Historic Preservation Offices and project grants to preserve America's native cultures; grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities to preserve significant campus buildings; the Save America's Treasures Grant Program for threatened nationally significant properties; and more recently, the Preserve America grant program for heritage tourism, including education, and economic revitalization. These grant programs not only preserve historic resources, they attract new economic investment.

Reauthorization of the ACHP also is an important objective as we work with this critical governmental agency to help protect historic resources while facilitating government-sponsored development. We are working closely with the ACHP on a number of important initiatives, including the Preserve America program and compliance tools.

We understand that the ACHP will discuss the specific provisions of S. 1378 that affect the ACHP. We believe these changes will increase the ACHP's effectiveness and strengthen the important role the ACHP has played in preserving the historic resources of our country.

As recommended at the beginning of this testimony, the Department believes that the authorization of the Historic Preservation Fund should be extended for ten years instead of six. The fund is now almost 40 years old. It has been highly successful in meeting the objectives established by Congress in preserving the historic resources of this country. We believe this success calls for a longer authorization than previously has been provided, while allowing Congress the traditional oversight role it has always maintained. The proposed amendment is attached to the testimony.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared remarks. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or members of the committee may have.

Proposed amendment to S. 1378, National Historic Preservation Act Amendments Act of 2005.

On page 2, line 6 strike “2011” and insert “2015”.